

Westward Expansion Photographic Analysis Activity

Names of Group Members: _____

In this activity, you will select each American Memory photograph collection that might contain photographs illustrating the themes of Westward Expansion. You will search the collections by entering one of the following keywords:

Indians	education	schools
Oregon Trail	plains life	farming
ranching	mining	cattle drives
railroad	gold rush	Pony Express
army	cavalry	forts
sod houses	pioneers	covered wagons
women	children	transportation
exploration	western art	Mormons

Select a photograph to analyze. Print one copy of the photograph. Attach the photograph to the questions. Write your names at the top right of the photograph. Answer the questions below based on your photograph.

1. What is the title of the photograph?
2. List two Library of Congress subject headings for the photograph.
3. In what American Memory collection is the photograph located?
4. Whose story do you think is being told and whose story is left untold?
5. What is the setting for the photograph?

6. Write one objective observation about the photograph.
7. Write one subjective observation about the photograph.
8. Do the clothing, the background, or any other elements of the photograph provide any clues about the photograph? Explain.
9. When and where in the past do you think that the photograph was taken? How can you tell?
10. If you had been the photographer, why would you have taken this photograph?
11. Does the photograph appear to be staged? If there are people in the photograph, are they posed?
12. Why did you choose this photograph?
13. What questions would you still like to have answered about this photograph? Is it possible to answer the remaining questions? How?